

The “EYE”

When Disaster Strikes **(Preparing a Family Disaster Supplies Kit)**

In October of 1997 the City of Lincoln was hit by a snow storm that left 13” of snow on the ground along with numerous large tree and power lines. During the days following the storm those of us without electricity or heat faced the types of challenges presented by a natural disaster. The community’s resources were overwhelmed causing a number of our citizens to rely on their own resources to obtain their basic needs.

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) concept was developed by the City of Los Angeles Fire Department (LAPD) in 1985. They realized that during the early stages of a catastrophic disaster their citizens would very likely be on their own. The Federal Emergency Management Agency found the CERT training program to be so beneficial that it is now committed to supporting the training of local CERT teams across the nation. If your Neighborhood Association or Neighborhood Watch group is interested in attending a CERT training you may call Volunteer Partners at 435-2100 or e-mail them at emergcoord@volunteerpartner.org

Even if you can not attend a CERT training session you can still benefit from having and maintaining a Family Disaster Supplies Kit. The following information was obtained from a CERT Training Participant Handbook and it describes what supplies should be gathered and stored. You’ll want to place the supplies you’re apt to need for an evacuation in an easy-to-carry container (these items will be listed with an asterisk *)



WATER

Store water in plastic containers. A normally active person needs to drink at least 2 quarts of water each day.

- ◆ Store 1 gallon of water per person per day .*
- (2 quarts for drinking, 2 quarts for food preparation and sanitation)
- ◆ Keep a 3-day supply of water for each member of your household.

FOOD

You’ll need to store at least a 3-day supply of nonperishable food. Pick foods that don’t have to be refrigerated, cooked or need water added. If you must heat any of the food pack a can of Sterno. Select food items that are compact and lightweight.* Include the follow types of food items in your kit:

- ◆ Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables.
- ◆ Canned juices, milk and soup (if powdered, store extra water)
- ◆ Sugar, salt and pepper
- ◆ High-energy foods: peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars and trail mix
- ◆ Vitamins
- ◆ Foods for infants, elderly persons, or persons on special diets
- ◆ Comfort/stress foods: cookies, hard candy, sweetened cereals, instant coffee and tees bags

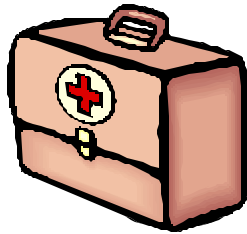
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Your Family Disaster Supplies Kit

FIRST AID KIT *

Assemble a first aid kit for your home and each of your vehicles. A first aid kit should include:

- ◆ Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
 - ◆ 2" sterile gauze pads (4 to 6)
 - ◆ 4" sterile gauze pads (4 to 6)
 - ◆ Hypoallergenic adhesive tape
 - ◆ Triangular bandages (3)
 - ◆ Moistened towelettes
 - ◆ Antiseptic
 - ◆ Thermometer
 - ◆ Tongue blades (2)
 - ◆ Petroleum jelly
 - ◆ Assorted sizes of safety pins
 - ◆ Cleaning agent/soap
 - ◆ Sunscreen
 - ◆ 2" sterile roller bandages (3 rolled)
 - ◆ 3" sterile roller bandages (3 rolled)
 - ◆ Scissors
 - ◆ Tweezers
 - ◆ Needles
- Nonprescription Drugs
- ◆ Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever
 - ◆ Anti-diarrhea medication
 - ◆ Antacid (for stomach upset)
 - ◆ Syrup of Ipecac (used to induce vomiting if advised by the Poison Control Center)
 - ◆ Laxative
 - ◆ Activated charcoal used if advised by the Poison Control Center



TOOL AND SUPPLIES

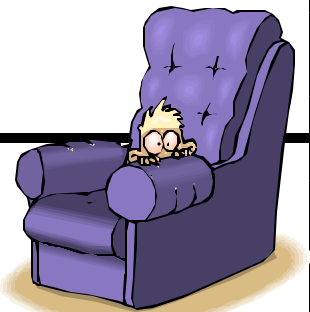
- ◆ Mess kits, or paper cups, plates and plastic utensils*
- ◆ Emergency preparedness manual*
- ◆ Battery-operated radio and extra batteries*
- ◆ Flashlight and extra batteries*
- ◆ Cash or traveler's checks and change*
- ◆ Non-electric can opener, utility knife*
- ◆ Fire extinguisher: small canister, ABC type
- ◆ Tube tent
- ◆ Pliers
- ◆ Tape

"HOME ALONE" CHILD SAFETY

As the summer months approach, our children are looking forward to the end of school. However, some parents are dreading the summer. It is often at this time of the year that many parents face the daunting question of "Is my child old enough to stay home alone?" Many parents must choose between leaving their children home alone during the day while they are at work or busy with other commitments, or find alternative care. This can be a task that parents dread.

"Home Alone" (the movie) put a humorous spin onto the topic, but obviously it was entirely unrealistic. The realities facing children who are home alone are very different. There are many factors that adults must take into account when deciding to leave their child home alone. Parents should ask themselves the following questions when evaluating their child's readiness to stay at home alone:

- ◆ **Is my child old enough?** Most experts say that a child should be 12 years of age in order for them to be left at home alone, and at least 15 years of age before they are left to care for a younger sibling. Make sure the child is mature enough to handle urgent situations.
- ◆ **What are my (parents) "rules and expectations"?** Develop and explain a list of rules (do home work, do household chores, talking on the telephone, watching television, using the computer, etc.) for the child to follow every time they are home alone. Go over the list often!!



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- ♦ **Make sure your child knows how to reach you.** Give your child your work phone, message phone or cell phone numbers and make sure he/she has easy access to them.
- ♦ **Have your child check in with you periodically during the day.** Set a time(s) that your child is to contact you. Also, make sure they have a person to call (neighbor, friend, etc.) if they cannot reach you.
- ♦ **Teach your children basic safety rules.** Teach your children not to go into their house if it appears that it has been burglarized; call 911 for emergencies; never let **anyone** into the home without prior permission from the parent and **never** tell someone on the phone that you are home alone.
- ♦ **Role play scenarios with your child that are appropriate.** Test your child's readiness by role playing possible incidents (fire, intruder, injuries, etc.) and see how they respond to these exercises.
- ♦ **Make sure your child has what he/she needs to be safe.** Give your child a house key and explain the need to keep it in a hidden place, like a backpack. Also, include a cell phone if you feel it is appropriate.
- ♦ **See that your child receives training in first aid and CPR.** This is especially important if the child will be watching other children. The AMERICAN RED CROSS provides a "baby sitting class for those children who are 12 years of age or older."

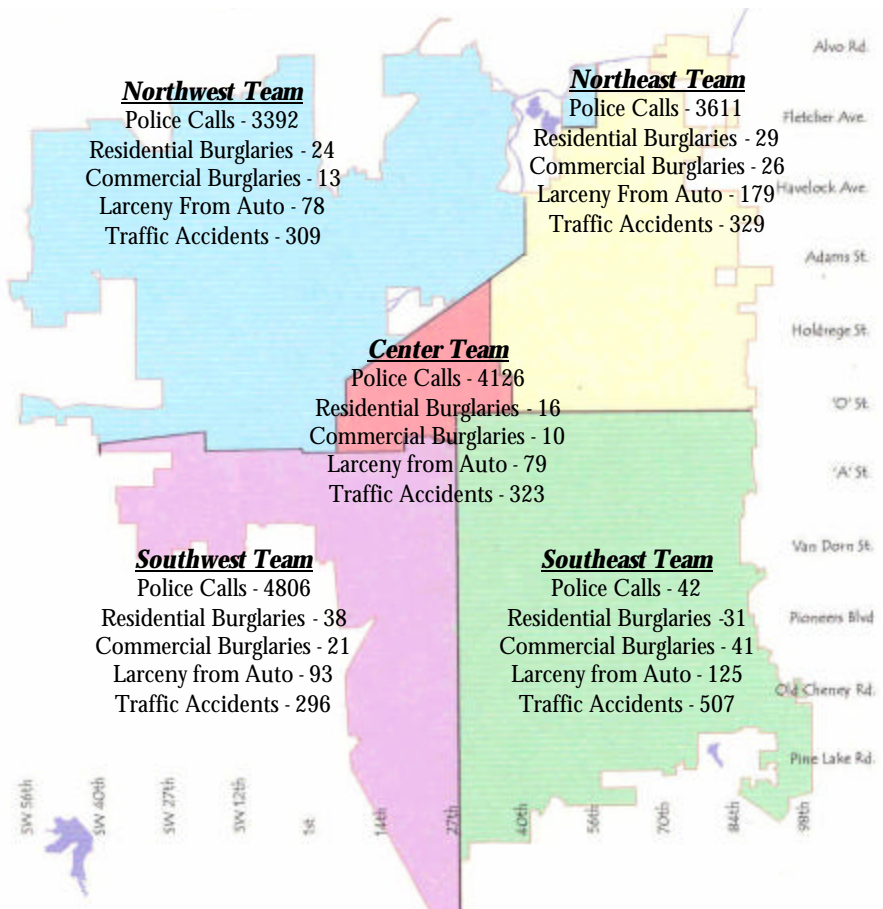
These are just some quick guidelines that will improve your child's safety when they are home alone. The important thing is to communicate with your child and do not let them stay alone if they are not ready to assume that role. If anyone has questions or wants more information, they can check the McGruff Organization website at www.mcgruff.org.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

Through February of 2005 there have been 20,649 police calls for service across the city. This is 8.8% fewer calls for service than in the same time frame in 2004. The total number of residential burglaries for the city so far is 138, a 6.2% increase from the previous year. Larcenies from auto reports are up 5.2% compared to this same time period last year. As of the end February 580 incidents of larceny from auto have been reported.

During the first two months of the year there have been 111 commercial burglaries reported. Compared to the same time period in 2004 that leaves us with a 141% increase in business break-ins. That is an unusually high increase in any crime and hopefully these burglaries will not continue to occur at this rate. The police department asks you to continue to pay attention to neighborhood businesses for any unusual people or occurrences and to call the police when you see any suspicious activities.

SUMMARY OF REPORTED CRIMES between 1-1-2005 and 2-28-2005



The “EYE”

Lincoln Police Department
Crime Prevention Unit
575 South 10th St.
Lincoln, NE 68508

Return Service Requested

It's Spring, The Home Repair Scam Season

The weather is warming up and we can't put off those needed home repairs much longer. It may seem convenient when the guy shows up at your front door telling you he just finished a repair job in the neighborhood and has materials left over. He is also willing to give you a cut-rate price if you can pay him up front. This convenient deal will most likely turn into a home repair nightmare.

There are two red flags to be aware of in this scenario. The first is the “contractor” knocking on your door offering to make repairs with left over materials. This is a very common set up line for the home repair scam artist. The second red flag has to do with paying for the repairs before they are completed. By law, contractors may not request more than 1/3 down payment on any job unless special materials need to be ordered and you agree to this. Never make the final payment until the job is completed.



Do some research before you hire a contractor. Ask for a place of business, customer references and his registration number. Call the Department of Labor, Contractor registration, at 1-402-595-3189 to verify whether the contractor is registered or whether he is exempt. If he needs to be registered and isn't, don't hire him. You should also contact the Better Business Bureau to determine if there any past complaints against the contractor. Get a detailed written contract, including the total price, work to be done and the start and finish dates for the project, signed by the contractor.

If you notice that the contractor's vehicle has out of state license plates this should cause you some concern. There are groups or families that travel the country and specialize in home repair fraud. These con artists are very mobile and difficult to locate after committing their scams. This community has a lot of very capable and honest contractors to pick from, so take your time and find one